

RECEIVED

AUG 19 2011

DEPARTMENT OF  
WATER RESOURCES

**LEN HARLIG**  
**BOX 2010**  
**SUN VALLEY, ID 83353**

Phone [208] 726-9308  
Fax [208] 726-7309  
E-mail: [lenharlig@cox.net](mailto:lenharlig@cox.net)

August 18, 2011

Interim Director  
Department of Water Resources  
PO Box 83720  
Boise, Idaho 83720-0098

Re: Water Measurement District, Upper Big and Little Wood River Basins

Dear Director Spackman,

I am a former Blaine County Commissioner and have worked with representatives of IDWR for many years. I fully support creation of the Water Management District, agree with its proposed dimensions, and look forward to its creation and utilization as it addresses long-time water problems here in Blaine County.

For decades the available water resource, both as surface water and ground water, has been exceeded by the demand for that water. As a result, water tables have fallen and senior water rights for irrigation have been cut-off at earlier dates. While it is obvious that weather and drought can take a substantial toll on the water resource, there is another significant component to the equation: use and overuse of water by a growing population. The problems are exacerbated by property owners and their lessees who use water without water rights and by property owners who use more water than their domestic exemption entitles them to. Additionally, the use of precious senior water rights for upstream aesthetic ponds, subdivision streams and water features add an unnecessary burden to farmers and ranchers downstream.

However, the two most critical problems facing communities like ours is the fact that demand exceeds supply in most years and we have no way to store excess water in good water years to meet demand in low water years; and water rights transfers of presently unused water rights, even inter-basin, do not create any new water; they just allow increased withdrawal from an ever-diminishing ground or surface source.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment, and best wishes for success with this important legislative endeavor.

Len Harlig  
*Len Harlig*

SCANNED

SEP 06 2011